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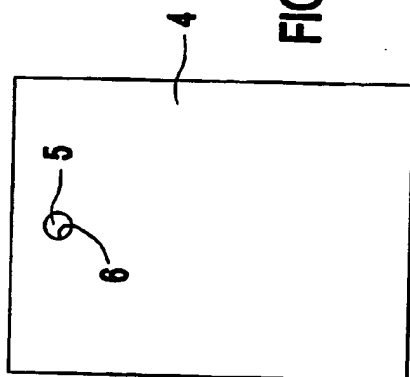


FIG 5

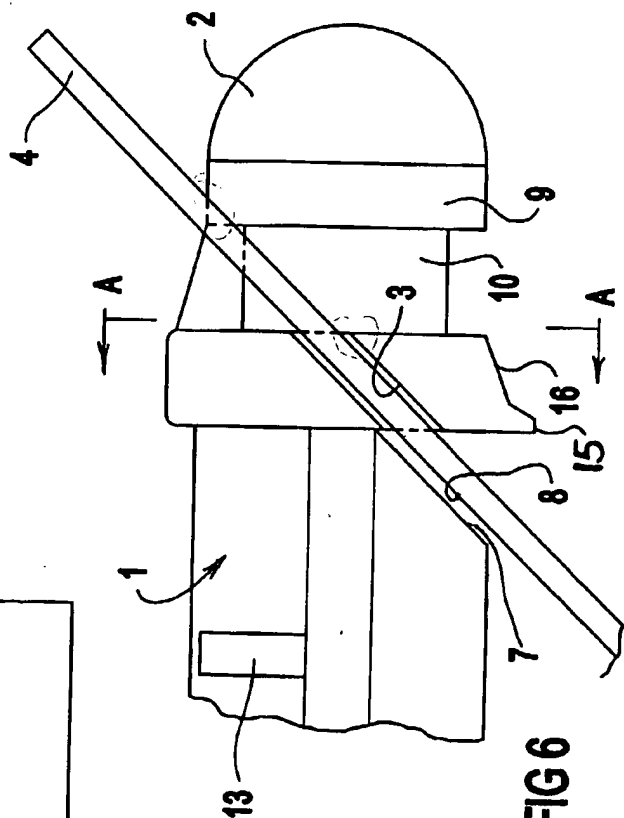


FIG 6

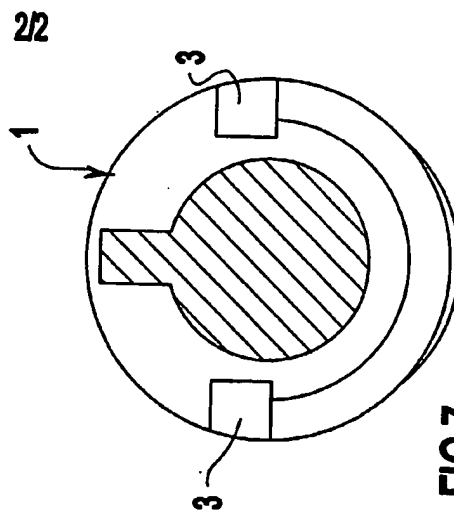



FIG 7

**AUSTRALIA**  
**Patents Act 1990**

**ORIGINAL**  
**COMPLETE SPECIFICATION**  
**STANDARD PATENT**

 Invention Title:     **DISPLAY OBJECT HOLDER**

 Applicant:       **NORWOOD INDUSTRIES PTY LTD**

 The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to me:

## DISPLAY OBJECT HOLDER

This invention relates to a display object holder and to a resiliently flexible display object such as a label in combination with a display object holder. It relates particularly but not exclusively to a display object holder in the form of a plant stake which is suitable for holding plant display objects at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder. The following discussion relates mainly to display object holders for plants, but it is to be understood that the invention is equally applicable to other display applications including retail point of sale displays.

Plant pots, trays and punnets carrying seedlings and small plants are produced in large volumes by wholesale nurseries. Each pot, tray or punnet needs to be marked with a label indicating the type of plant growing in the container and often providing additional information relating to the plant. Labels can be applied by pushing them into the soil, although there is a significant risk that such labels will blow away. Labels can also be applied by tying them around the plant in the plant pot; however this technique is relatively labour intensive and can only be applied if the plant is sufficiently large to take a label without being damaged.

Australian Patent 616346 describes a label mounting device which can be formed into plant containers, allowing labels to be fixed to the containers. This arrangement is quite effective, and requires no more effort in affixing labels than is required for inserting labels into the soil. However, it has been found, especially with larger plants, that the level of the top of the container is not always the most suitable place for positioning a label. It is often desirable that a label be positioned in such a way as to maximise the prospects of attracting the attention of a prospective customer.

US Patent 5,537,768 describes a label display stake for use with plant containers. The label display stake has an upper label carrying portion and a lower mounting portion which is located in a plant container when the stake is in use. The label display stake successfully displays a label at a height designed to attract a customer's attention, and some of the embodiments described in

US Patent 5,537,768 effectively retain labels on their upper label carrying portion; however, such labels are not necessarily secured in such a way as to ensure that the contents of the label are displayed to prospective customers in the most advantageous manner.

- 5 Australian Provisional Patent Application PO6506 describes a display device and multi-purpose plant stake which has a mounting formation for holding the display device in place and an attachment formation for attaching a display object (such as a label) to the display device. The device operates in a manner similar to that of the display stake of US Patent 5,537,768, although the
- 10 label or other display object is held in place more securely. However, this is a relatively expensive type of display device to manufacture, and there is a need for a less expensive way of achieving a similar result.

- An inexpensive form of display stake is currently available. It consists of a relatively straight plastic stake with an enlarged pointed section at each end.
- 15 Near the enlarged portion is a protruding ring, and between the protruding ring and the enlarged portion is a narrower portion. The pointed end is pushed through a circular hole on a label, and the label sits on the stake around the narrower portion, between the protruding ring and the enlarged pointed end. Either end of the stake can be used for the label, and if a shorter stake is
- 20 required the stake can be broken in half. However, the label sits loosely in position and can flap round or blow off in the wind.

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a resiliently flexible display object (such as a label, packet of seeds, or sachet of fertiliser) in combination with a display object holder, wherein:

- 25 (a) the display object has a hole, the border of which forms an internal edge to the display object;
- (b) the display object holder has an end which can be inserted through the hole in the display object;
- (c) the display object holder has at least one groove located near the end;
- 30 (d) by stretching the hole in the display object, the end of the display object holder may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display

object is seated in the groove in the display object holder to locate the display object at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder.

The hole may be of any suitable shape, size and configuration. It may be round, square, rectangular, triangular, hexagonal, oval-shaped or any other  
 5 suitable shape. The shape and size should be complementary to the shape and size of the end of the display object holder. It is not necessary that the display object be entirely made from resiliently flexible material; all that is necessary is that the region of the display object around the hole be resiliently flexible.

The end of the display object holder may be of any suitable shape, size  
 10 and configuration. It should preferably be complementary to the shape of the hole in the display object, but this is not essential. For example, the hole may be generally round in shape, whereas the end of the display object holder may be square in cross-section. It is preferred although not essential that the shape and size of the end be such that the internal edge of the display object  
 15 stretches in order to fit over the end.

The groove may be of any suitable shape and configuration. It is preferred although not essential that the groove be substantially straight, and at an angle of approximately 45 degrees to a longitudinal axis of the display object holder. It is especially preferred that there be two grooves, located on opposing  
 20 sides of the display object holder, such that the internal edge of the display object can be seated in both grooves to locate the display object at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder.

It is preferred that the display object further include a cut-away portion against which part of the display object near the internal edge rests when the  
 25 internal edge of the display object is seated in the one or more grooves, so that the display object is held at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder by cooperation between the internal edge of the display object and the one or more grooves and the cut-away portion of the display object holder.

As further preferred features, the display object holder may include:

30 (a) an enlarged portion near the end, the dimensions of the enlarged portion being such that the internal edge of the display object is stretched as the hole passes over the enlarged portion; and

(b) a narrower portion having dimensions smaller than the dimensions of the hole, located between the enlarged portion and the one or more grooves; so that the display object can be held loosely around the narrower portion of the display object holder or firmly by the one or more grooves.

5

According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a display object holder, including:

(a) an end which can be inserted through a hole in a resiliently flexible display object wherein the border of the hole forms an internal edge to the display object; and

(b) at least one groove located near the end; wherein, by stretching the hole in the display object, the end of the display object holder may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display object is seated in the groove in the display object holder to locate the display object at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder.

Preferred features of the display object holder according to this aspect of the invention are similar to the preferred features of the first aspect of the invention.

The display object holder may be in the form of a plant stake. The plant stake may have one or more laterally projecting wings which can be used to prevent the plant stake rotating when it is placed in soil or another plant growth medium.

The invention will hereinafter be described in greater detail by reference to the attached drawings which show an example form of the invention. It is to be understood that the particularity of those drawings does not supersede the generality of the preceding description of the invention.

Figure 1 is a side elevation of a display object holder according to an embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a cross-sectional view of the display object holder of Figure 1, taken along the line B-B.

Figure 3 is a different side elevation of the display object of Figure 1.

Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view of the display object holder of Figure 3, taken along the line C-C.

Figure 5 shows a generic display object suitable for use with the display object holder of Figure 1.

- 5 Figure 6 is a side elevation of a detail of the display object of Figure 5 mounted on the display object holder of Figure 1.

Figure 7 is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the display object holder of Figure 6, taken along the line A-A.

- Referring firstly to Figure 1, there is shown a display object holder 1,  
 10 which includes an end 2 which can be inserted through a hole in a resiliently flexible display object. A groove 3 is located near end 2. By stretching the hole in the display object, end 2 of display object holder 1 may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display object is seated in groove 3, locating the display object at a predefined angle relative to display object holder  
 15 1.

- Figure 5 shows a display object 4, which has a hole 5. The border of hole 5 forms an internal edge 6 to the display object. Figure 6 shows display object 4 seated in groove 3 of display object holder 1. Display object 4 reaches this position by inserting end 2 through hole 5 and stretching hole 5 until the  
 20 appropriate position is reached. As can be seen from Figure 6, the angle of groove 3 relative to display object holder 1 is approximately 45 degrees, so that display object 4 is displayed prominently to passers-by.

- As seen from Figure 7, in the preferred embodiment two grooves 3 are provided on display object holder 1, located on opposing sides, such that  
 25 internal edge 6 of display object 4 can be seated in both grooves.

- In the preferred embodiment, display object holder 1 includes a cut-away  
 30 portion 7 (best seen in Figure 6) against which part 8 of display object 4 (near internal edge 6) rests when internal edge 6 is seated in grooves 3. Thus display object 4 is held at the predefined angle (in this case 45 degrees) relative to display object holder 1 by cooperation between internal edge 6, grooves 3, and cut-away portion 7.



Figure 6 further shows that display object holder 1 has an enlarged portion 9 near end 2. The dimensions of enlarged portion 9 are such that internal edge 6 of display object 4 is stretched as hole 5 passes over enlarged portion 9. There is also a narrower portion 10, having dimensions smaller than the dimensions of hole 5, located between enlarged portion 9 and grooves 3. Display object 4 can be held loosely around narrower portion 10 as an alternative to being held firmly in position by grooves 3.

When installing display object 4, it is necessary for part of hole 5 to pass over ledge 15. This ledge represents the point of furthest stretch for hole 5, before the hole returns towards its normal dimensions as internal edge 6 seats itself in grooves 9. Ramp 16 assists in moving the display object towards and over ledge 15.

Display holder 1 forms a plant stake. In the embodiment shown in Figures 1 to 4, the plant stake includes laterally projecting wings 11. When the plant stake is placed in soil or another plant growth medium, wings 11 prevent or inhibit rotation.

End 12 is similar in configuration to end 2. This allows either end of the plant stake to be used. It also allows the plant stake to be broken in half and used as two separate half-length stakes.

Ridges 13 are provided as an optional enhancement on display object holder 1 to assist in providing a firm grip when the display object holder is being pressed into soil or another plant growth medium. As seen in Figure 3, numerical measuring units 14 are provided as an optional enhancement so that the display object holder can be used to measure the height of a plant, depth of soil, spacing between plants, or some other such distance.

The orientation of the display object holder of Figure 1 and the relative orientation shown in Figure 3 can be seen by examining the cross-sectional views of Figures 2 and 4. Ridges 13 and wings 11 can be seen protruding in both cross-sectional views.

Display object holder 1 may be made from any suitable material or combination of materials. Suitable materials include plastics and metals.

Display object 4 may be any suitable display object. A particularly preferred type of display object is a label. Other suitable display objects include seed packets and fertiliser sachets. Display object 4 may be made from any suitable material or combination of materials. The area around hole 5 should be

5 resiliently flexible to permit operation in the above-described manner. The whole of display object 4 may be made from such materials, or part may be made from other materials such as paper and metals. Suitable flexible materials include plastics and rubber.

It is to be understood that various alterations, additions and/or

10 modifications may be made to the parts previously described without departing from the ambit of the invention.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder, wherein:
  - 5 (a) the display object has a hole, the border of which forms an internal edge to the display object;
  - (b) the display object holder has an end which can be inserted through the hole in the display object;
  - (c) the display object holder has at least one groove located near the end;
  - 10 (d) by stretching the hole in the display object, the end of the display object holder may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display object is seated in the groove in the display object holder to locate the display object at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder.
- 15 2. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder according to claim 1, wherein the display object holder has two grooves, located on opposing sides of the display object holder, such that the internal edge of the display object can be seated in both grooves to locate the display object at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder.
- 20 3. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the display object holder further includes a cut-away portion against which part of the display object near the internal edge rests when the internal edge of the display object is seated in the
  - 25 one or more grooves, so that the display object is held at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder by cooperation between the internal edge of the display object and the one or more grooves and the cut-away portion of the display object holder.
- 30 4. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the display object holder includes:

- (a) an enlarged portion near the end, the dimensions of the enlarged portion being such that the internal edge of the display object is stretched as the hole passes over the enlarged portion; and
- (b) a narrower portion having dimensions smaller than the dimensions of the hole, located between the enlarged portion and the one or more grooves; so that the display object can be held loosely around the narrower portion of the display object holder or firmly by the one or more grooves.

5. A display object holder, including:

- (a) an end which can be inserted through a hole in a resiliently flexible display object wherein the border of the hole forms an internal edge to the display object; and
- (b) at least one groove located near the end; wherein, by stretching the hole in the display object, the end of the display object holder may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display object is seated in the groove in the display object holder to locate the display object at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder.

6. A display object holder according to claim 5 having two grooves, located on opposing sides of the display object holder, such that the internal edge of the display object can be seated in both grooves to locate the display object at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder.

7. A display object holder according to claim 5 or claim 6 further including a cut-away portion against which part of the display object near the internal edge rests when the internal edge of the display object is seated in the one or more grooves, so that the display object is held at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder by cooperation between the internal edge of the display object and the one or more grooves and the cut-away portion of the display object holder.

8. A display object holder according to any one of claims 5 to 7 further including:

- (a) an enlarged portion near the end, the dimensions of the enlarged portion being such that the internal edge of the display object is stretched as the hole  
5 passes over the enlarged portion; and
- (b) a narrower portion having dimensions smaller than the dimensions of the hole, located between the enlarged portion and the one or more grooves;  
so that the display object can be held loosely around the narrower portion of the display object holder or firmly by the one or more grooves.

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9. A display object holder according to any one of claims 5 to 8 wherein the display object holder forms a plant stake.

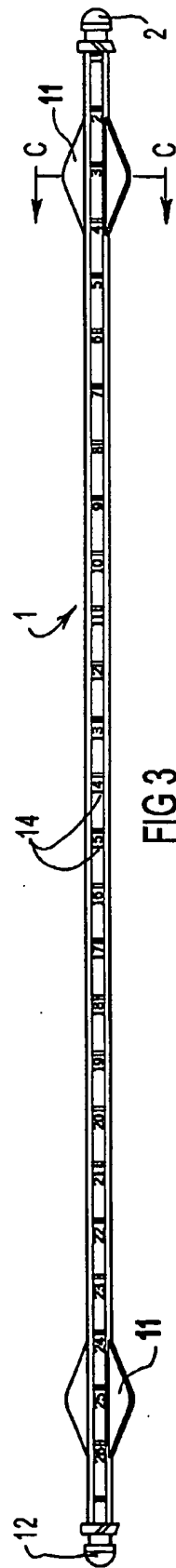
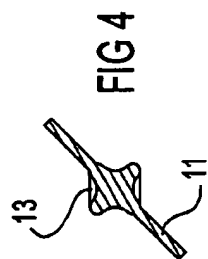
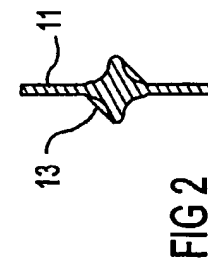
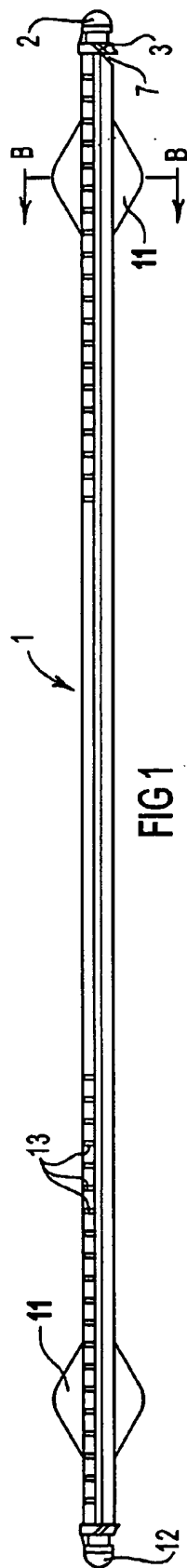
- 10. A display object holder according to claim 9 further including one or more  
15 laterally projecting wings which can be used to prevent the plant stake rotating when it is placed in soil or another plant growth medium.

Dated: 4 March, 1999

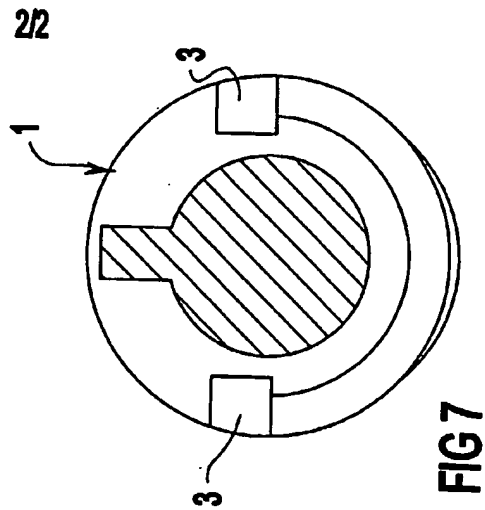
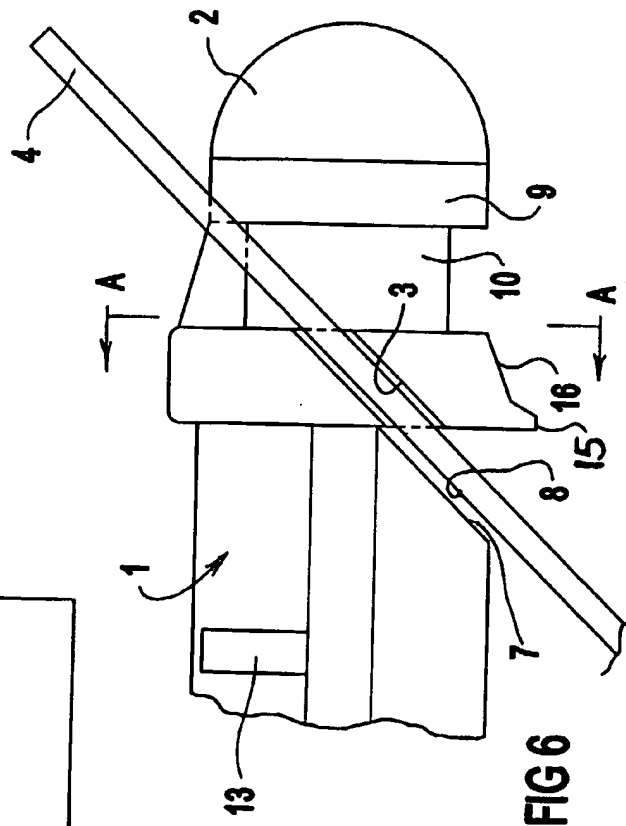
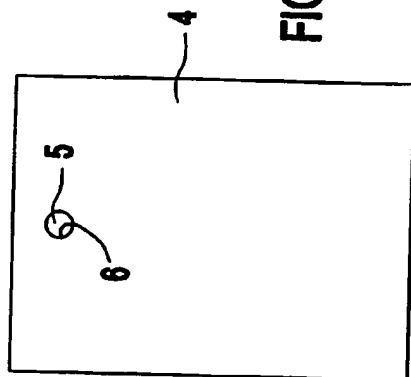
20 Phillips Ormonde & Fitzpatrick  
Patent Attorneys for  
Norwood Industries Pty Ltd.

*David B Fitzpatrick*

The image shows four 5x5 dot patterns arranged vertically. The first pattern represents the digit '1', the second '2', the third '3', and the fourth '4'. Each pattern is composed of black dots on a white background.



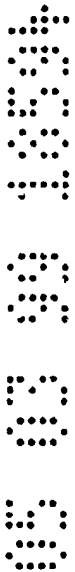
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## ABSTRACT

A display object holder (1), includes an end (2) which can be inserted through a hole (5) in a resiliently flexible display object (4) wherein the border (6) of the hole forms an internal edge to the display object; and at least one  
5 groove (3) located near the end (2); wherein, by stretching the hole in the display object, the end of the display object holder may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display object is seated in the groove in the display object holder to locate the display object at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder.

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THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder, wherein:
  - 5 (a) the display object has a hole, the border of which forms an internal edge to the display object;
  - (b) the display object holder has an end which can be inserted through the hole in the display object;
  - (c) the display object holder has at least one groove located near the end;
  - 10 (d) by stretching the hole in the display object, the end of the display object holder may be passed through the hole until the internal edge of the display object is seated in the groove in the display object holder to locate the display object at a predefined angle relative to the display object holder.
- 15 2. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder according to claim 1, wherein the display object holder has two grooves, located on opposing sides of the display object holder, such that the internal edge of the display object can be seated in both grooves to locate the display object at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder.
- 20 3. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the display object holder further includes a cut-away portion against which part of the display object near the internal edge rests when the internal edge of the display object is seated in the
  - 25 one or more grooves, so that the display object is held at the predefined angle relative to the display object holder by cooperation between the internal edge of the display object and the one or more grooves and the cut-away portion of the display object holder.
- 30 4. A resiliently flexible display object in combination with a display object holder according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the display object holder includes: